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Summary record of the 17th meeting
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President: Ms. King (Vice-President) ..... (Saint Vincent and the Grenadines)

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In the absence of Ms. Chatardova (Czechia), Ms. King (Saint Vincent and the Grenadines), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 10.12 a.m.

Agenda item 17: Non-governmental organizations
(E/2018/32 (Part I), E/2018/L.8, E/2018/L.9 and E/2018/L.10)

1. **Ms. Tsvetanova** (Observer for Bulgaria), speaking on behalf of the European Union and its member States; the candidate countries Albania, Montenegro, and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia; the stabilization and association process country Bosnia and Herzegovina; the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine, said that the European Union attached great importance to the fairness and effectiveness of the work of the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations. In a world increasingly hostile to non-governmental organizations (NGOs), it was incumbent upon the United Nations to facilitate their access to and participation in its work. In that connection, the European Union and its member States welcomed the steps that would be taken to improve the Committee's functioning and receptivity to civil society. However, while careful review of applications for accreditation was expected, all legitimate applicants should receive fair and reasonable treatment, should only have to answer questions that were properly motivated and were in line with the letter and spirit of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31, and should be granted accreditation in a timely fashion. Should the Committee fail to take that approach, States members of the European Union reserved the right to bring the matter before the Council. With that in mind, she expressed support for the accreditation of US Committee for Human Rights in North Korea and Iran Human Rights Documentation Center, as proposed in E/2018/L.8 and E/2018/L.9, respectively, following the repeated deferral of their applications by the NGO Committee.

Draft decision E/2018/L.8: Application of the non-governmental organization US Committee for Human Rights in North Korea for consultative status with the Economic and Social Council

2. **Ms. Eckels-Currie** (United States of America), introducing draft decision E/2018/L.8, said that US Committee for Human Rights in North Korea was a leading non-governmental organization (NGO) in the field of human rights research and advocacy and a source of information and analysis for United Nations offices and agencies. Her Government fully supported granting special consultative status to the NGO, which clearly met the eligibility criteria outlined in Council resolution 1996/31.

3. The role of the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations was to give civil society a voice at the United Nations, as engagement with civil society benefited the Organization and all Member States, including through information received about the reality on the ground. Unfortunately, the Committee had too often fallen short of its responsibility, hindering the participation of organizations whose international credibility was well established; that was cause for concern whenever it occurred.

4. US Committee for Human Rights in North Korea played a leading role in promoting human rights in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. It had published more than 30 reports on the status of North Korean compliance with international human rights obligations, including those reflected in United Nations treaties, and its objectivity and impartiality were widely recognized. Since 2016, however, the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations had blocked its application by means of repetitive questioning and unreasonable requests for detailed information about its work and funding. Some Committee members were abusing the due diligence process, going beyond reasonable enquiry in order to delay action indefinitely.

5. As US Committee for Human Rights in North Korea was a reputable NGO that clearly met the criteria for consultative status, the United States and other sponsors of the draft decision wondered whether NGO Committee decisions to defer its application were made for reasons other than merit. Constantly deferring a decision on an NGO that clearly met the criteria for consultative status had led numerous civil rights activists to raise concerns about the Committee's decision-making process. While some NGOs worked on issues that were controversial to some Governments, attempting to silence their voices ran counter to the founding principles of the United Nations. The adoption of the draft decision would clearly illustrate the importance that the Council placed on civil society participation.

6. **Ms. Herity** (Secretary of the Council) announced that Andorra, Belgium, Croatia, Czechia, France, Iceland, Ireland, Latvia, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Poland, Romania and Turkey had informed the Council secretariat prior to the meeting that they wished to join the sponsors of the draft decision. She then noted that Austria, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Finland, Italy, Norway, Slovenia, Spain and Sweden also wished to become sponsors.

7. **The President** said that the delegations of China and the Russian Federation had requested a recorded vote on the draft decision.

8. **Mr. Ri** Song Chol (Observer for the Democratic People's Republic of Korea), in a general statement, said that his delegation categorically rejected the draft decision. While many NGOs played an important role in various sectors and participated in the activities of the United Nations, those that sought consultative status should engage in activities that were in line with the Charter of the United Nations and the provisions of resolution 1996/31, and not politically motivated and aimed against a Member State. At four meetings held between May 2016 and February 2018, the Committee had posed similar questions to NGOs seeking consultative status. At the last of those meetings, the application of US Committee for Human Rights in North Korea had been rejected by a vote, held at the request of the United States, probably because of the notorious politicized aims and activities of the NGO.

9. The NGO, which had never visited the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, systematically misrepresented the human rights situation in his country. It violated the sovereignty of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, interfering in its internal affairs through manipulation and dissemination of fake data and reports, and carried out the hostile policy of the United States with funding from its Government. The fake "human rights" NGO had never broached the subject of the suffering imposed on the Korean people by the United States through national division, military threats and sanctions, and its hidden objective was clearly to overthrow the social system and Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. The questions asked by the Committee had been legitimate and the rude behaviour of the United States made it unfit to be a Committee member. The attempt to overrule the previous decision of the Committee was a flagrant challenge to the Charter and to resolution 1996/31. Granting consultative status to a United States human rights plot agency disguised as an NGO would infringe upon universally recognized principles of opposing selectivity, politicization and double standards, and encourage the United States to persevere in its continuous violations of developing countries' sovereignty.

10. **Mr. Shulgin** (Russian Federation), speaking in explanation of vote before the voting, said that the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations painstakingly reviewed applications submitted by non-governmental organizations seeking consultative status with the Council, including their projects, organizational structure and budgets, before making its recommendations. The Committee members therefore had a fuller understanding of the workings of those organizations than most members of the Council, which did not have the time or the facts necessary to make well-reasoned decisions with respect to those applications on its own.

11. At its regular session in January, the Committee had decided that consultative status should not be granted to either US Committee for Human Rights in North Korea or Iran Human Rights Documentation Center. Although all applications had been subject to the same review procedure, the United States had called for a vote to grant consultative status specifically to those two organizations, thereby confirming the suspicions harboured by some Committee members that the two organizations had close financial ties to Government authorities and were engaged in overt politically motivated actions that targeted the foreign Governments in question, in violation of the Charter of the United Nations and paragraph 13 of Council resolution 1996/31. Following the conclusion of the Committee's session, a smear campaign had been launched to discredit the Committee's decision as having been politically motivated and adversarial.

12. The Committee conducted an even-handed, expert assessment of all applications it received in line with paragraph 8 of Council resolution 1996/31, which affirmed the inviolable right of States to obtain information of interest to them from the organizations applying for consultative status with the Council. All attempts to pressure the Committee to do otherwise were unacceptable. There was also no justification for revisiting its decisions. Furthermore, by second-guessing the Committee's recommendations, the Council would effectively discredit the Committee's work. The Russian Federation would therefore vote against the draft decisions to grant consultative status to US Committee for Human Rights in North Korea and Iran Human Rights Documentation Center.

13. **Ms. Andreyeva** (United Kingdom), in a general statement, said that civil society organizations had an important role to play in the United Nations and at all local and national levels of policymaking. The mandate of the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations was to review applications for consultative status against the criteria laid out in resolution 1996/31, guided by the principles of non-discrimination, equality, participation, transparency and accountability, and to facilitate access to such status for NGOs that met those criteria. Its role was not to defer applications indefinitely, as had been the case for US Committee for Human Rights in North Korea and Iran Human Rights Documentation Center. Those reputable NGOs provided

expertise, insight and input to the United Nations on the human rights situation in countries that were the subject of General Assembly resolutions every year. They were exactly the kinds of NGOs from which the United Nations should welcome increased participation.

14. The United Kingdom remained concerned about repeated discrimination against NGOs with a human rights focus. Respecting human rights was essential to building secure, prosperous and resilient societies. It hoped that all newly elected and returning members of the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations would ensure that NGOs granted consultative status represented the full range of issues of concern to the Council and the United Nations. Clearly, that included the fundamental pillar of human rights.

15. **Mr. Montwedi** (South Africa), speaking in explanation of vote before the voting, said that it was regrettable that the recommendations of the Committee should be reopened for discussion once again. The Committee exercised its mandate with due diligence and did not discriminate. The NGO in question was one of hundreds whose applications had been deferred pending answers to pertinent and legitimate questions, and it was not clear why it was being treated differently. There was a growing tendency by some members of the Committee to resort to unnecessary voting while answers to legitimate questions were still pending, which amounted to coercion of the Committee and compromised its work. His delegation had previously voted against the accreditation of the NGO and would do so in the vote about to be taken.

16. *A recorded vote was taken on draft decision* E/2018/L.8.

In favour:

Afghanistan, Andorra, Belgium, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Czechia, Denmark, France, Germany, Ghana, Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Mexico, Morocco, Norway, Philippines, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Spain, Togo, Turkey, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Uruguay.

Against:

Belarus, China, Russian Federation, South Africa, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam.

Abstaining:

Algeria, Azerbaijan, Benin, Chad, Ecuador, El Salvador, India, Lebanon, Peru, Rwanda, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Sudan, Tajikistan.

17. *Draft decision* E/2018/L.8 *was adopted by 29 votes to 6, with 13 abstentions.*

18. **Ms. González Tolosa** (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) said that her country supported the participation of civil society and grass-roots organizations in the work of the United Nations, provided such participation was in line with resolution 1996/31. In its review of applications for consultative status, every member of the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations had the responsibility and prerogative to ask questions to assess whether applicants met the criteria laid out in the resolution. At the Committee's meeting in February, the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela had voted against granting consultative status to US Committee for Human Rights in North Korea in recognition of the right of members to ask such questions, and it had not altered its position. The practice of submitting draft decisions to reopen certain issues and to ignore the previous work of the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations set a negative precedent with respect to how the Council dealt with matters entrusted to its subsidiary bodies, and weakened the role of the Committee.

Draft decision E/2018/L.9: Application of the non-governmental organization Iran Human Rights Documentation Center for consultative status with the Economic and Social Council

19. **The President** said that the draft decision had no programme budget implications.

20. **Ms. Blais** (Canada), introducing the draft decision, said that Iran Human Rights Documentation Center was a highly credible NGO, whose work was directly relevant to that of the Council and the United Nations.

21. Her delegation fully supported the rules and procedures of the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations, pursuant to resolution 1996/31, and recognized that consultative status was usually granted on the recommendation of the Committee. However, in recent years, some NGOs, particularly those working on human rights issues, had been subjected to excessive and repetitive questioning by the Committee. The rules and procedures were thus being misused for political purposes to prevent NGOs from gaining consultative status. Since its application for consultative status in 2010, Iran Human Rights Documentation Center had been asked nearly 70 questions, all of which it had answered fully and transparently, in good faith. The Center was independent and non-partisan, and its mission was to establish a historical record of the human rights situation in the Islamic Republic of Iran. It was known for its objective, fact-based reporting, and it clearly met the criteria set out in resolution 1996/31.

22. While not everyone might agree with the reports or statements issued by different NGOs, civil society had an important role to play; the rules and procedures should not be used to silence debate or shield countries from scrutiny of their human rights records. Resolution 1996/31 made clear that, although the Committee could make recommendations, the Council alone had the power to grant consultative status to an organization. The members of the Council should therefore exercise that authority and grant consultative status to a highly qualified NGO.

23. **Ms. Herity** (Secretary of the Council) announced that Andorra, Belgium, Croatia, Czechia, France, Iceland, Ireland, Latvia, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Poland and Romania had informed the Council secretariat prior to the meeting that they wished to join the sponsors. She then noted that Austria, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Finland, Italy, Norway, Portugal, Slovenia, Spain and Sweden also wished to become sponsors.

24. **Ms. Eckels-Currie** (United States of America), in a general statement, said it was regrettable that a vote had been called regarding an organization that so clearly met the criteria for consultative status. Iran Human Rights Documentation Center was a reputable NGO that could contribute actively to the work of the United Nations, given that the General Assembly adopted resolutions every year condemning the human rights situation in Iran, and the mandate of the Special Rapporteur was renewed annually by the Human Rights Council. The fact that Iran refused to allow the Special Rapporteur access to the country made the organization's work particularly relevant.

25. In determining whether to grant NGOs consultative status, Council members helped give a voice to the voiceless. The application had been pending for seven years and the same questions were asked year after year. It was frustrating that the Committee was a more of a barrier to, than an enabler of, the participation of NGOs in the work of the United Nations.

26. **Mr. Hassani Nejad Pirkouhi** (Observer for the Islamic Republic of Iran), in a general statement, said that the joint action by Canada and the United States to undermine the integrity of the United Nations and to abuse human rights issues was nothing new but nonetheless irresponsible.

27. A political organization funded by the United States Department of State and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Canada was being portrayed as a non-governmental organization and was seeking consultative status. If Iran Human Rights Documentation Center was an NGO, perhaps a new definition of the term was needed. His delegation's observations and arguments concerning such a manipulative move had been presented during the 2018 main session of the NGO Committee and were reflected in paragraphs 32, 35 and 41 of the Committee's report (E/2018/32 (Part I)). The nature of the organization would have been further exposed had the secretariat of the NGO Committee shared with the Council the financial reports of the so-called NGO and the issues raised in the question-and-answer sessions conducted in the Committee. Cherry picking and double standards by the United States were not surprising; nor was its abuse of United Nations platforms.

28. It was ludicrous that the United States should continue to block NGOs within Iran from gaining consultative status, while relentlessly pressing for its fabricated and intrusive political organizations to be granted such status. The application of Imam Khomeini Relief Foundation had been blocked by the United States for the past three sessions, and Iranian NGOs had almost no opportunity to engage with the United Nations owing to the travel ban and the illegal unilateral sanctions imposed by the United States against Iranians. The concerns expressed by the United States about civil society space therefore sounded utterly deceitful. It should not expect others to believe it was serious about human rights, democracy or civil society.

29. It was easy to imagine how the United States would have reacted if the situation had been the other way around, and an organization funded by Iran that purported to document the human rights situation in the United States had been seeking consultative status. The organization referred to in draft decision E/2018/L.9 did not shy away from confirming that its foundation had been made possible by a grant from the State Department of the United States. That organization remained in existence thanks to the generous support of the State Department of the United States and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Canada. Regardless of its activities, the organization was not an NGO; draft decision E/2018/L.9 was therefore factually incorrect to refer to it as such.

30. Rejecting the application of double standards, he called for equal treatment in line with the principle of the sovereign equality of all Member States enshrined in Article 2 of the Charter of the United Nations. He also invoked principle 2 of Council resolution 1996/31 on conformity with the spirit, purposes and principles of the Charter, and principle 13 establishing that the basic resources of the organization were to be derived in the main part from contributions of the national affiliates or other components or from individual members. Furthermore, paragraph 57 (a) of resolution 1996/31 explicitly called for the withdrawal of the consultative

status of entities similar to the organization under consideration. He drew attention as well to paragraph 25 of the same Council resolution. The sovereignty, territorial integrity and democratic processes of Iran should be inviolable.

31. An entity formed and funded by an adversary alien State, whose purpose was to intrude in the internal affairs of another Member State and which was solely accountable to the Governments of America and Canada, could hardly contribute to the objectives of the Council or those of the United Nations. Iran continued to encourage further engagement of its civil society with the United Nations, but strongly denounced intrusive acts by external players, especially those with a dark history regarding the promotion and protection of human rights in Iran and elsewhere. His country trusted NGOs funded by Iranians, and run by Iranians for Iranians, above organizations that were biased, politicized and funded by other countries.

32. His delegation hoped that the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and resolution 1996/31 would prevail and the motion to overturn the Committee's decision would be rejected. Such action would establish the Council's credibility in making judicious decisions on granting status to genuine NGOs and would also contribute to upholding the basic principles upon which the United Nations had been founded.

33. **Mr. Montwedi** (South Africa), speaking in explanation of vote before the voting, said that his delegation had voted in the Committee to reject the application. Coercion must not be used to prevent members of the Committee from carrying out their fiduciary responsibilities. The NGO in question should have the opportunity to respond to the questions posed. South Africa would therefore vote against its accreditation.

34. *A recorded vote was taken on draft decision* E/2018/L.9.

In favour:

Andorra, Belgium, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Czechia, Denmark, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Mexico, Norway, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Spain, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Uruguay.

Against:

Belarus, China, Iraq, Russian Federation, South Africa, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam.

Abstaining:

Algeria, Azerbaijan, Benin, Chad, Ecuador, El Salvador, Ghana, India, Lebanon, Morocco, Peru, Philippines, Rwanda, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Sudan, Tajikistan, Togo.

35. *Draft decision* E/2018/L.9 *was adopted by 22 votes to 7, with 17 abstentions.*

36. **Mr. Escalante Hasbún** (El Salvador) said that his delegation defended the legal attributions of each body, and did not support the reopening of a report of a subsidiary body by the principal body, since that would create a precedent that could then be applied to other subsidiary bodies of the Council or to subsidiary bodies of the General Assembly, such as the Human Rights Council. His delegation had always voiced its opposition to the reopening of reports and had therefore abstained from the voting on draft decisions L.8 and L.9.

37. **Ms. González Tolosa** (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) said that her delegation had voted against the draft decision in line with its principled position in defence of the provisions of resolution 1996/31. The members of the Committee had the right to continue to examine an application and the responsibility and prerogative to ask questions to determine whether NGOs met the criteria for consultative status. A decision to reopen discussions set a dangerous precedent and weakened the powers of the Committee.

38. **Ms. Nguyen** Lien Huong (Viet Nam) said that Committee members had a great responsibility to ensure the authenticity and eligibility of NGOs and must be able to pose the necessary questions to establish whether applicants respected the spirit, purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and met the requirements set out in resolution 1996/31. Her delegation had therefore voted against the two draft decisions, since the Committee should be given more time to consider the applications in a comprehensive and appropriate manner.

Draft decision E/2018/L.10: Applications of the non-governmental organizations Kurdistan Institute for Human Rights and Al-Shafa'a Humanitarian Organization for consultative status with the Economic and Social Council

39. **The President** said that the draft decision had no programme budget implications.

40. **Mr. Al-Khaqani** (Iraq), introducing the draft decision, said that, while Iraq encouraged civil society to engage with the United Nations, the two organizations in question had not been registered as NGOs with the competent national authorities, as

required by Iraqi legislation. Iraq was not opposed to granting them consultative status and would assist them in obtaining the necessary registration. Further clarification was required regarding the scope of their activities and the authenticity of the documents they had presented. His Government therefore requested the support of Council members in returning the applications of the two organizations to the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations.

41. **Ms. Eckels-Currie** (United States of America), speaking in explanation of position before the decision, expressed concern at such unprecedented and unnecessary action and said that the two NGOs had been recommended for consultative status by the Committee. It was not a requirement of resolution 1996/31 that they be registered in the country to which their work related or in which they worked. A number of Member States had defended the Committee's prerogative to block accreditation for human rights organizations, yet remained inexplicably silent when a draft decision to reverse an approval was under consideration.

42. *Draft decision E/2018/L.10 was adopted.*

Action on the recommendations contained in the report of the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations on its 2018 regular session (E/2018/32 (Part I))

43. **The President** invited the Council to take action on three draft decisions contained in chapter I of the report.

Draft decision I: Applications for consultative status and requests for reclassification received from non-governmental organizations, as amended by the adoption of draft decisions E/2018/L.8, E/2018/L.9 and E/2018/L.10

44. *Draft decision I, as amended by the adoption of draft decisions E/2018/L.8, E/2018/L.9 and E/2018/L.10, was adopted.*

Draft decision II: Requests for withdrawal of consultative status

Draft decision III: Report of the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations on its 2018 regular session

45. *Draft decisions II and III were adopted.*

Agenda item 19: Social and human rights questions

(b) Social development (E/2018/26 and A/73/61–E/2018/4)

46. **Mr. Hannigan** (Iceland), Chair of the Commission for Social Development, introducing the report of the Commission for Social Development on its fifty-sixth session (E/2018/26), said that the priority theme of the Commission had been "Strategies for eradicating poverty to achieve sustainable development for all" and that the theme of the emerging issue had been "Towards sustainable and resilient societies: innovation and interconnectivity for social development". The Commission had also reviewed relevant United Nations plans and programmes of action pertaining to the situation of social groups, as well as the social dimensions of the New Partnership for Africa's Development. It had convened four high-level panels, which had discussed the priority theme, the emerging issue, the third review and appraisal of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing and the theme "Towards inclusive, resilient and sustainable development: an evidence-based approach to the mainstreaming of disability in the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the Agenda 2030". The Chair's summary of the panel discussions was available on the Commission's website. The session had been well attended by representatives of Member States, United Nations entities and accredited NGOs from all regions, and had been marked by fruitful discussions on the panel discussion themes as well as on youth and the family.

47. Four draft resolutions had been adopted, covering the priority theme, the social dimensions of the New Partnership for Africa's Development, the third review and appraisal of the Madrid Plan of Action on Ageing, 2002, and the future organization and methods of work of the Commission for Social Development. After highlighting some key provisions in each draft resolution, the Chair said that the priority theme for the 2019 session would be "Addressing inequalities and challenges to social inclusion through fiscal, wage and social protection policies".

48. **Mr. Padova** (Officer in Charge, Division for Social Policy and Development, Department of Economic and Social Affairs), introducing the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the objectives of the International Year of the Family and its follow-up processes (A/73/61–E/2018/4), said that the aim of the report was to contribute to the exchange of good practices in family policymaking. It focused on national efforts and provided examples of policies that promoted work-family balance, empowered women and girls, and enhanced social integration and

intergenerational solidarity. It also provided information on recent trends in research and awareness-raising activities. Progress and growing interest in those areas had been noted and initiatives to promote them (for example, social security and child allowances, increased quality time between parents and children, and parenting education) had proven effective. Member States were encouraged to further recognize that family-oriented policies and programmes were integral to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and to provide greater support for research and impact assessment studies.

49. **Mr. Ríos Sánchez** (Mexico) said that his delegation would continue to advocate for determining the best ways to avoid overlaps in the working methods and substantive themes of the Commission for Social Development, the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly. The adoption of the draft resolution on future organization and methods of work of the Commission for Social Development would be a step in the right direction; however, the Council and General Assembly should consider amending the Commission's mandate as well as those of other subsidiary bodies of the Council.

50. The proposed priority theme for the 2019 session of the Commission was consistent with the direction that his delegation had suggested should be taken by the Council and the high-level political forum on sustainable development. Pursuant to paragraph 7 of the draft resolution on future organization and methods of work of the Commission for Social Development, his delegation hoped that future Commission documents would refer only to review of the outcome document of the high-level meeting of the General Assembly, "The way forward: a disability-inclusive development agenda towards 2015 and beyond", which had been adopted by means of General Assembly resolution 68/3.

51. Regarding the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the objectives of the International Year of the Family and its follow-up processes, his delegation welcomed the emphasis placed on policies on the protection and well-being of the family, in fulfilment of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Nevertheless, the link between the 2030 Agenda and the human rights agenda was crucial; the 2030 Agenda was based on human rights principles and standards that were directly related to family life. The participation of civil society organizations was key to attaining the objectives set out in the report.

52. Lastly, while welcoming the emphasis on impact assessment studies, he wished to point out that data disaggregation was also vital to determining impacts on different family members and different types of families.

53. **Ms. Silvera Flores** (Uruguay) said that her delegation particularly appreciated the reference in the report on the International Year of the Family to discussions in the Third Committee of the General Assembly in which several Member States had acknowledged the fundamental role played by families in social inclusion and integration and highlighted the existence of different forms of the family in different political, social and cultural systems. Different forms of the family were also recognized in the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development held in Cairo and the Beijing Declaration and Platform of Action.

54. Uruguay implemented policies, programmes and plans that recognized and responded to such diversity, and promoted an atmosphere of tolerance, inclusion and non-discrimination. Her delegation understood that the term "family" in the report referred to all types of families and would continue to promote recognition and inclusion of a broader definition of the term "family" within the framework of the United Nations.

55. **Mr. Escalante Hasbún** (El Salvador) said that the discussions in the Commission for Social Development should be more current, a concern that his delegation had already expressed prior to the start of the fifty-sixth session. The priority theme of the session had been very pertinent; he welcomed, in particular, the emphasis on multidimensional poverty, an issue that had drawn greater attention in recent times and a key theme of the 2030 Agenda that was relevant not only to middle-income countries such as his own but also to many other countries. In that respect, the Commission had indeed fulfilled its role to promote social inclusion.

56. Nevertheless, the Council should steer the Commission more firmly towards avoiding duplication of efforts to address the needs of older persons, young people and persons with disabilities. While duplication was sometimes deliberate and justified, the Commission should make every effort to eliminate it where possible by forging closer links with other forums. Lastly, his delegation wished to express its wholehearted support for the remarks just made by the representative of Uruguay on different forms of the family.

Action on the recommendations contained in the report of the Commission for Social Development on its fifty-sixth session (E/2018/26-E/CN.5/2018/6)

57. **The President** invited the Council to take action on the draft proposals contained in chapter I, sections A and B, of the report.

Section A

Draft resolution I: Future organization and methods of work of the Commission for Social Development

Draft resolution II: Social dimensions of the New Partnership for Africa's Development

Draft resolution III: Strategies for eradicating poverty to achieve sustainable development for all

Draft resolution IV: Third review and appraisal of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing, 2002

58. *Draft resolutions I, II, III and IV were adopted.*

Section B

Draft decision: Report of the Commission for Social Development on its fifty-sixth session and provisional agenda and documentation for the fifty-seventh session

59. *The draft decision was adopted.*

60. **Mr. Ríos Sánchez** (Mexico) said that, in light of the resolution on methods of work that had just been adopted, his delegation hoped that future documents on the subject of persons with disabilities would reflect the outcome document of the high-level meeting of the General Assembly on disability and development, adopted as General Assembly resolution 68/3.

61. **The President** said she took it that the Council wished to take note of the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the objectives of the International Year of the Family and its follow-up processes, as contained in document E/2018/4.

62. *It was so decided.*

(h) Comprehensive implementation of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action

63. **The President** said that the General Assembly, in paragraph 33 of its resolution 62/220, had decided that the Assembly, the Council and the Human Rights Council should constitute a three-tiered intergovernmental process for the comprehensive implementation of and follow-up to the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action.

64. She informed the Council that no documentation or draft proposals had been submitted on the item.

The meeting rose at noon.